Retrograde

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Retrograde

by Necronon

Summary

Or, that time I said I was thirsty for some Show!Will/Novel!Hannibal and, upon not finding any, wrote this.

Notes

Items in this series stand alone unless otherwise stated. Additional content and sequels, if they occur, will likely happen as chapters.

See the end of the work for more notes

Will shuts the door behind him and stands in a bathroom he doesn't recognize. A mason jar of sea glass squats on the counter by a chipped enamel sink, where there should be a double vanity with vessel sinks. A photo hangs on the wall behind it of Will and Walter smiling over a large gar. When he looks in the mirror, it's to find a beard grown in overnight, hair shaggy and two inches longer than explicable.

Several hours later, Molly stands on the veranda of their shared cottage. Ivy crowds the gable. A wooden placard that reads GRAHAM, hand-carved, hangs beneath by one of its rusted chains. Molly's hair, still mussed from sleep, sweeps across her forehead and shoulders.

She watches him back the Tahoe (*You sold the car, honey. Don't you remember?*) out of the drive, pulling her robe against the autumn air and crossing her arms. Quietly angry like he remembers her at the end.

She hadn't believed him when he'd said he didn't remember. Any of it. Not retirement, not the foreclosed cottage in Sugarloaf, its slate roof missing shingles like teeth where straight-line winds off the Atlantic had stolen them.

No.

He'd snaked an arm around a waist, pressed a kiss to a neck.

He'd mistaken her for Hannibal. Hannibal, in their villa on the Argentine coast. Not the continental US. Not Molly. Not Sugarloaf Key.

Will's hands shake on the wheel. The camouflage seat covers smell like menthol, and he's craving the cigarette he missed with coffee; he hasn't smoked since his early 20s, but his fingers are yellowed, hands dry from drink. On one, there's a wedding ring. He touches his face and feels the scar—completely healed—through his beard. Same wallet. Different phone. He picks it up and flips it open. He knows the number by heart and hopes to God it connects.

"Will?"

"Jack. Where's Hannibal."

"What're you talking about, Will?"

"Hannibal. Where is he."

"Where you put him." Silence. "Where he's been for *three years*."

"Baltimore?" Will gambles.

"Will, is everything okay? Did something happen?"

"I need to talk to him."

“It’s been years. You can’t just call out of the blue and ask for favors like that. There’s no reason—”

“Jack, *please.*”

There’s a pause. Will hears Jack sigh. A glass clinks and something rattles. “I’ll tell them you remembered something. Something about—” Paper now. Pages. “We got this new guy—tentatively calling him ‘Buffalo Bill.’ I had a trainee lined up for an interview, real hotshot, but I’ll tell her we got someone else. Just this once, because I made a promise.” Jack’s voice drops, more weary than Will remembers it. “And if anyone can get Lecter to talk, it’s you. I thought you weren’t coming back. *We* thought you were done. After...”

“I’ll be there. How soon?”

“Three days.”

“Okay, yeah. Thanks, Jack.”

“Don’t mess this up, Will. I don’t understand it, but I need all the help I can get on this one. *Three days.*”

Jack hangs up.

Will drives.

Will puts his room on the one of the cards he finds in his wallet. He drops his bag on the floor by the bed, sits, and calls Jack to touch base. Everything is still go.

“The FBI must be gagging for it if they’re sending *you* in. What I can’t figure out,” Lecter continues, turning. His profile is creased with age, hair striped by silver. “Is why you’ve come. Polite life in Sugarloaf not all it’s cracked up to be? Did you tire of looking in the mirror every morning and seeing a man whose—” Hannibal’s face slackens. He sucks in a sharp breath and steps, curiously, closer. “No, there is something different about you.” Lecter’s eyes widen into flat, black discs, amber bands reignited as he moves beneath the

overhead light. “Your eyes. So very...” An anticipatory tongue darts out to wet dry lips. “*Alive.*”

“Tell me. About that night. On the cliff.”

“You were there, Will.”

“You don’t remember?”

“I’ve aged but not atrophied. I remember.” Almost singsong, but Will can parse the mild offense. And an uptick that sounds distinctly dangerous. Hannibal’s interest is always dangerous. “What is it, Will? Come for the old scent again, or... something else.”

Will balks. Hannibal smiles.

“Something else, then. Do they know?”

“How do *you?*”

“Do you remember, Will? About time and teacups?”

End Notes

My tumblr.

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